

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-14 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 5, and 9 being the independent claims. Claim 9 has been amended as indicated above. This change introduces no new matter, and entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above Amendment and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner argues that claim 1 is anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,579,472 ("Keyworth"). Keyworth discloses an email system in which a single subscriber, from a single computer, can contact any one of several parties. As illustrated in Figure 3 of Keyworth, this reference describes a "VIP Gallery" in which several parties are displayed. These parties represent people that the subscriber may wish to contact via email. These parties also represent potential senders of email to the single subscriber. The specification of Keyworth describes how incoming messages can be received from a given member of the VIP Gallery; the specification also describes how the subscriber can send messages to any of the members of the V.I.P. Gallery (Keyworth, column 4, lines 42-56).

Keyworth does not disclose an email system configured to run on a shared computer that is configured to enable a plurality of users, one at a time, to access the email system running on the shared computer, as described in claim 1 of the present invention. In addition, Keyworth fails to disclose a multi-user graphical user interface that concurrently displays the status of multiple email accounts of the plurality of users, as described in claim 1. An example of such a graphical user interface running on a shared computer is seen in Figure 5 of the present invention. Bill Rice, Chris Walls, Bill Morris, Janet Harden, etc., represent a plurality of users that may wish to use the computer on which this display is presented, for purposes of sending or receiving email. The people identified on the display of Figure 5 are workers who can walk up to the computer and use the email system, for example, on a factory floor. In contrast, Figure 3 of Keyworth illustrates a number of parties to (or from) which a single subscriber can send (or receive) email. Keyworth's VIP gallery represents an address book or rolodex of sorts for the subscriber. The illustrated people are contacts of the subscriber, not other subscribers that can use the computer. Therefore, because Keyworth fails to disclose all features of claim 1 of the present invention, this claim is not anticipated by Keyworth.

The Examiner further argues that claims 2 and 4 are anticipated by Keyworth. Claims 2 and 3 depend from independent claim 1 of the present invention. These claims therefore necessarily include all features identified in claim 1. Because Keyworth fails to disclose all features of claim 1, Keyworth likewise fails to disclose all features of dependent claims 2 and 3. For at least this reason, Keyworth fails to anticipate any of these claims.

The Examiner also argues that claim 5 is anticipated by Keyworth. Keyworth, however, fails to disclose a graphical user interface comprising a status module that enables a computer to indicate current status of multiple email accounts of a plurality of users concurrently on a computer. As discussed above, Keyworth discloses a graphical user interface through which a single subscriber can send emails to any of a number of parties shown in a VIP gallery. Likewise, such a subscriber can receive emails from any of such parties. Keyworth therefore describes a graphical user interface that illustrates a single user's email contacts. Claim 5 of the present invention, in contrast, describes a graphical user interface that concurrently indicates the status of multiple email accounts of a plurality of users. Again, this is illustrated in Figure 5 of the present invention. This shows an embodiment of the invention in which multiple users can see the status of their respective email accounts. For example, at a single computer, Bill Rice can see the status of his email account, Chris Walls can see the status of his email account, Bill Morris can see the status of his email account, etc. The respective statuses of all the email accounts of the respective users are presented concurrently on a single shared multi-user computer, as described in claim 5. Keyworth therefore fails to disclose the features of claim 5. Hence Keyworth does not anticipate claim 5 of the present invention.

The Examiner further rejects claims 6-8 as being anticipated by Keyworth. Claims 6-8 depend from independent claim 5, and therefore include all features described in claim 5. Because Keyworth fails to disclose all features of claim 5, as discussed above, Keyworth fails to disclose all features of any of claims 6-8. Therefore, none of claims 6-8 are anticipated by Keyworth.

The Examiner rejects claim 9 as being anticipated by Microsoft Office '97. The folders and subfolders described in the Microsoft Office reference (p. 780) are used to store incoming messages.

The first paragraph on this page refers to folders in which a user could store messages received regarding a project, and folders for the most common types of email received. In contrast, the present invention includes a personal file folder into which incoming and outgoing messages can be stored. This is clarified by the amendment to claim 9 above. There is no disclosure of Microsoft Outlook storing outgoing messages in folders. For at least this reason, therefore, Microsoft Outlook fails to disclose all features of claim 9 and therefore fails to anticipate this claim.

The Examiner further rejects claims 10-14, arguing that these claims are anticipated by Microsoft Office. Claims 10-14 depend from claim 9, and therefore necessarily include all the features of claim 9. As discussed above, claim 9, as amended, is not taught by Microsoft Office. Microsoft Office therefore fails to anticipate any of claims 10-14. For at least this reason therefore, none of claims 10-14 are anticipated by Microsoft Office.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner argues that claim 4 is obvious over Keyworth. The Examiner's argument is premised on his contention that Keyworth discloses the system according to claim 1 of the present invention. As discussed above, however, claim 1 is not anticipated by Keyworth. For at least this reason, therefore, claim 4 is not obvious in light of this reference.

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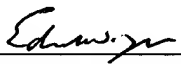
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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